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SUBJECT: EMBASSY PORT-AU-PRINCE, CORE EMERGENCY ACTION
COMMITTEE MEETING - APRIL 07 , 2008

¶1. (U) On April 07, 2008, Post's core Emergency Action Committee (EAC) was convened by Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson. EAC discussed protests and demonstrations occurring in Les Cayes and Gonaive last week, as well as in the Port-au-Prince area today.

¶2. (U) Protests and demonstrations have spread to Port-au-Prince, but are largely non-violent with reports of vandalism to vehicles. EAC members discussed today's situation involving scattered pockets of demonstrators around the city and their impact on local transportation in general as well as for Mission activities. Various political, social, and student groups may be participating in the modest turnout of demonstrators, which to date do not appear to be well organized or coordinated. United Nations Peacekeeping Mission to Haiti (MINUSTAH) and the Haitian National Police (HNP) are monitoring protests and are strategically locating to better respond to threats. The size of the groups vary from small groups to large groups. Some groups appear to be taking advantage of the situation to cause trouble, throwing rocks, and burning tires in the streets, while other groups of varying sizes appear to be earnest in the protests of the GOH's inaction in regard to inflation. The group sizes vary from in the tens to in the hundreds. One group has been estimated at 2000 persons, but that number has not been verified. SEPTTEL to follow.

¶3. (U) EAC discussed security for the schools, non-official communities, official community, and TDYers. The school is not releasing early today, but is allowing students to depart if their parents are picking them up from school. The decision was made to reissue the travel warning as a wardens message and to reissue RSO Emergency Contact information and Post's travel notification policy. Mission personnel are being asked to pass information to the RSO for purposes of coordinating security for the Mission. Additionally, given the nature of the demonstrations as they have unfolded during the day, the Embassy has put the move to the New Embassy Compound (NEC) on hold given that the HNP and MINUSTAH are busy dealing with the unfolding situation.

¶4. (U) The Ambassador concluded the meeting noting that all appropriate security measures are currently in place and Post will continue to monitor the situation.
SANDERSON